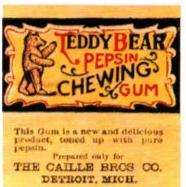
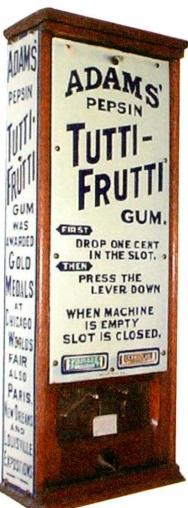


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MARCH 2005
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Message from Our President

This past Chicagoland was one of the best shows we've had. According to the promoter, the gate and turnout was as good if not better than ever. Most of the dealers I had spoken to said that they were having a great show. The promoters even had donuts available for the dealers (if you were quick enough to get some). Hats off to the new owners and good luck with future shows. I am looking forward to even better productions in the future. Chicagoland is still the best place for a coin-op collector to satisfy their collecting needs. Whether a new or seasoned collector there always seems to be something of interest at Chicagoland. The visit to Jasper's house was a major hit with the members. For the first time since I have been visiting his home, Jasper let everyone ride the completed carousel. There were nearly 250 club members and guests that turned out for this meeting. Everyone had a great time even with the few glitches we had with parking. I would like to thank all the members who participated and welcome the new members who joined that evening. Special thanks to Erick Johnson and Randy Razzoog for helping check our members in at the door. Our next meeting will be held at the Hilton Hotel across the street from the Pheasant Run on Friday, April 8th at 7pm. We will have a great guest speaker and I know you will all enjoy the program. At the meeting I hope to have completed the incorporation process for the club and approve our by-laws. We will have elections of new officers at the November meeting. If you would like to nominate or run for office please let me know at walex6@msn.com. I would like to add a secretarial position to the officers to help support the other positions of President, Vice-President and Accounting/Membership office.

This issues' cover story was the combined effort of Roger Smith, Randy Razzoog, Dave Cook, Ken Rubin and myself. Roger did a great job of providing the text of the story. I personally learned a lot and can finally connect the dots between vending machine and chewing gum collectors. Thanks to all who helped put this story together.

We have a great line of clothing available to members that would like to sport the C.O.C.A. Logo. These are being provided by the Running Stitch (please see their ad in this packet). I personally like the

In this Issue:

- Match Machine with Unusual Coin Entry
by John Carini 3
- E-Bay and the Slot Machine
by Don Creekmore 4
- Tales of the Hunt - Knowledge is Money in the Bank
by Tim Christensen 6
- Building a Slot Machine
by Gerald Shearer's 8
- **COVER STORY** - Chewing Gum and the Machines That Sold It!
Roger Smith, Randy Razzoog, Dave Cook, Ken Rubin and Alex Warschaw 10
- A Shocking Expose in Coin-Op!
by John Peterson 25
- Convention Survey
by Ken Durham 28

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**Deadline for Next Issue:
May 13th, 2005**

continued on page 2

Message from Our President - continued

one that has the Logo and underneath says "I Buy Coin-Op Machines" - this lets all the dealers at that local antique show know exactly what you are looking for without saying anything.

We are always looking for members who would like to share some of their thoughts or coin-op stories with us. Starting with this issue any author that submits a ***qualifying*** article for publication in the C.O.C.A. Times will receive a \$10.00 credit towards their annual membership. Reprints of old articles will not count. If you have something you would like to put down on paper please contact Paul Hindin at *bedvibr8or@aol.com*. He would be glad to help you put it together.

Unfortunately we have had very little response to the request to submit machines for the 2005 calendar, as a result we will not be publishing one for 2005. If you would like to have a calendar for 2006

please submit photos of machines to Jack Freund at *jbgum@msn.com*. If you have any questions, suggestions or submissions for the 2006 calendar I am sure Jack would love to help.

Dan Davids is coordinating the California convention in July. Knowing Dan it will be a great get together with some of the premier collections in the country being made available for the first time to our members. If you have a group of collectors in your city and would like to contact me for information and guidance.



C.O.C.A.
r information

Alex Warschaw
President, C.O.C.A.

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Match Machine with Unusual Coin Entry

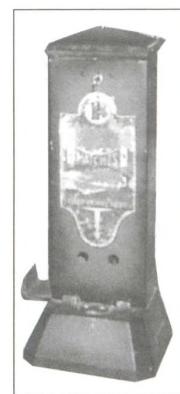
by John Carini

We haven't been doing much travel lately, so we have to make the most of our weekends and local antique stops. Over Labor Day Weekend, we stopped at the South Beloit flea Market. This was the first time we attended this show. It opened at 7:00 am, and we were there when it opened. I was a bit disappointed, because there was only about 35 booths. It had rained the night before, so the grounds were wet, and it was cool and damp. There was new merchandise in a few booths, and some general antiques in the others. One booth had a 1950's Jennings slot machine, not working, market \$850. A few had gas station collectibles, and some had vintage toy trucks. Overall, disappointing.

Our next stop was the local antique shops. Since it was only 8:00 am, we stopped for breakfast at a restaurant right next door to one of our favorite malls, the roscoe antique mall. Luckily, the mall opened early that day. I really like this mall because each time I go through it always seems to have lots of new merchandise, especially nice advertising pieces. This time we picked up a match machine that I previously had my eye on. It was a 1920's Northwestern Match Vendor (see photo) in nice shape. I got it for \$145. As I picked it up I heard my son calling me, running with a machine under his arm. He wasn't sure what it was, so we

set it down and looked it over. It's an early match vendor in nice original condition. When I first looked at it, I thought the coin entry had been broken off. Upon further inspecting, I could see the coin entry was at the top of the handle. The machine came with key, and was marked \$135. (we got 10% off.) I had not seen one like this before, and when I returned home, couldn't find one similar in Silent Salesman. Does anyone have information on this machine?

At a mall across the street, we found a Modern Vendor for \$250. and an Advance Model D for \$450. - both priced too high to purchase. We stopped at several other antique malls, but didn't purchase anything. I really enjoy the shops in this area because not only do I consistently find nice general advertising, beer and liquor advertising, but occasionally a nice coin-op machine pops up.



Antique Slots

Denver, Colorado

Kenna and I would like to thank all the good people we have met through the years. It's hard to believe that it has been 25 years of doing the shows and having the fun stuff on the side. 25 Years of scrounging, buying, selling, restoring and of course doing the shows. However, the big man upstairs says it's time to slow down and make room for the next generation of collectors. Once again....THANK YOU....It's Been Fun!

Live Long and Prosper, JOHN & KENNA JOSEFFY

**NOTE: John passed away on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2004,
Our sincere sympathy goes out to his family.**

EBAY and the Slot Machine

by Don Creekmore

How many times have you gone to eBay hoping to find a completed or current auction for a particular slot machine? While searching you could swear you looked at an auction for that same model just a few weeks ago, but it is gone, lost in the oblivion of internet commerce. The reason results cannot be found is that eBay only archives auction listings for 30 days. Once that time is up, the information is no longer available to the public.

For collectibles like baseball cards or comics, this is no big deal. There are so many examples of the very same thing that there is constantly an auction running or closed out within 30 days of each other. With antique slot machines, this is not the case. As eBay continues to grow, so does the sale of vintage slot machines on their site. For this reason the results of these auctions are becoming an important factor in the overall market of this hobby.

Late in 2003, I decided one of my New Year's resolutions would be to record the sales results of every eBay auction for antique slot machines. I thought this would give me an accurate view of what antique slot machines are selling for on the internet. So rather than waiting for January 1st, I started on November 1st, 2003.

Like many resolutions, they seem noble and exciting at first, but the interest wanes and they do not turn out to be any fun, like dieting. This project was different. As I started recording auction results on a daily basis, I found it to be enjoyable and noticed some very interesting trends.

I quickly realized there needed to be some way to organize and compare all the machines without recording the entire auction. I decided to start a spreadsheet in Excel by grouping the machines into columns by manufacturer, model and denomination, condition and price.

I used a condition scale of 1 to 5 being a mint condition example and 5 being a non working machine with major parts missing. With my columns set I started recording. I quickly decided

that I would only record results for auctions that actually got a bid and note if the reserve, if any, was met. I also only recorded real antique slot machines (not the repo War Eagles & Golden Nuggets) and no console models. Why no consoles? First, I do not like them. Second, they are too big to send using conventional shipping, which then skews what people are willing to bid.

Fast forward to December 31st, 2004 and low and behold I did it! So instead of keeping all this information to myself I decided to share some of it with my fellow COCA members in this and future issues.

So, how many slot machines did sell in that 14 month span? I must first say that I could have missed a few or double counted a couple due to a re-listing but my official count is 1,294 machines. That's a little over 92 machines per month and a little over 1100 machines for 2004 alone! Below I have listed out a few of the highlights for the last 14 months.

- Number of Mills: 753
Most expensive Mills:
Dewey Upright with Jackpot 5¢ - \$15,050.00
- Number of Jennings: 243
Most expensive Jennings:
Golf-A-Rola 25¢ - \$12,000.00
- Number of Watling: 90
Most expensive Watling:
Rol-A-Top with front venders, gold award, skill stops 5¢ - \$6,000.00
- Number of Pace: 110
Most expensive Pace:
Races - \$7,200.00
- Number of Buckley: 22
Most expensive Buckley:
Bones with Jackpot - \$14,950.00
- Number of Caille: 24
Most expensive Caille:
Century Upright with Music Box - \$15,000.00
- Number of Groetchen: 33
Most expensive Groetchen:
Columbia with Gold Plating - \$1,000.00

- Most Expensive Machine:
Mills Dewey with Jackpot Upright - \$15,050.00
- Most common Model Listed: *Mills Vest Pocket*
- Overall Average Price: \$1,083.85
- Number that did not hit reserve: 325 - 25%
- Number that sold with "Buy It Now": 80 - 1%

There were a number of quite notable machines that sold. There were 4 Buckley Bones machines, all selling for over \$10k. Caille Operator Bell Cast Iron for \$8,100. (reserve not met). Jennings Buckaroo for \$6,302. Jennings Golf-A-Rola for \$12,000. Mills Baseball for \$7,200. Mills Checkboy for \$6,500. Pace Bakers Racers for \$6,100. Pace Races \$7,200. (reserve not met). Set of Roll-A-Tops 1¢ through 50¢ went for \$15,100.

Some of the older or harder to find brands also appeared in limited numbers, those were:

- Amusement Machine Co. - Little Casino - \$3,750.00
- Bally - Reliance Dice with Jackpot - 5¢ - \$14,500.00
- Burtimer - Pony 5¢ - \$2,250.00 & \$2,047.00
- C&F - Baby Grand 5¢ - \$1,800.00 (ended with a "Buy It Now" bid)
- Clawson - Three Jackpot counter Pocket - 5¢ \$3,700.00 (reserve not met)
- Fey - Twin Jackpot Conversion - 10¢ - \$1,660.01
- Kenney - Pyramid - 5¢/25¢ - \$1,495.00
- Paupa & Holchreim - Columbia 5¢ - \$3,700.00 (reserve not met)
- Sun - Bicycle - \$7,600.00 & \$3,350.00 (second with new wood case)
- Superior - automatic Salesman Mints of Merit - 5¢ \$5,600.00
- Vendet - Midget 2 Reel - \$1,930.00

One of my first observations was the number of Mills machines listed compared to all the other companies. They represented 60% of all the machines sold! Rounding out the big 5, Jennings came in second with Pace third, Watling fourth and Caille fifth. Granted, eBay is not all inclusive of every machine in existence. It does however show what is currently being offered on the market and what is most readily available for sale in the 21st Century.

The next interesting detail that seems fairly consistent was the selling price for restored versus un-restored machines. In many cases a very good un-restored example would always bring more money than complete shiny restored examples. The exceptions to this rule

were originally shiny machines like the Jennings Standard & Sun Chiefs, Pace Chrome Deluxe's and various Mills Chromed machines.

Another aspect of the market on eBay was the strength of slot machines was a bit surprising. With only four listings was the always popular Watling Treasury. One nickel example with front mint venders in excellent condition received a high bid of \$5,605 (reserve met). The seemingly ever present Mills Vest Pocket on the other hand had 92 listings with the high coming in at \$1,524.75 for an example still in the original shipping box.

I know there are a number of people that do not buy or sell slot machines on eBay for a variety of reasons. While there are reproductions, dishonest sellers, shipping issues and dealing with emails, really how different is it from going to an auction or buying from an ad in a magazine? All of these issues are part of every hobby now and both buyers and sellers need to be aware of them.

I have actually talked with many people who never considered collecting vintage coin operated machines until they happened upon an auction on eBay. As with many collecting fields, eBay has opened it up to new collectors, which is extremely important for any hobby.

In the entire history of collecting antique slot machines has there ever been a time that 80 - 100 antique slot machines are available for sale every month to anyone? For this reason the sales results on eBay are important to the hobby. If not simply to gauge the value of machines but also the trends in restorations, popularity of different models and rarity of some machines.

Finally I would like to preface this article by saying I am not an all knowing or seeing expert on vintage slot machines. I do greatly enjoy the hobby and buying/selling them. With that experience and a commitment to recording the results on eBay I hope to provide you with some insight into the trends of the hobby on the internet twice a year. I hope to meet many of you at the upcoming COCA events for 2005. For detailed information on specific machines please feel free to visit my website at: www.nationsattic.com/coca.htm or contact me directly at slots@nationsattic.com

Good Huntin!, Don Creekmore, Nations Attic.

If anyone cares to do this with other areas of coin-op, please contact Paul Hindin.

— TALES OF THE HUNT —

Hosted by **Jack Freund**

This issue's "TALE" comes from Tim Christensen. He lives in "The Show Me State" of Missouri. It is a great story about a great find. In fact, it's a story of two finds, both of the same machine! Let's name this "TALE".....

KNOWLEDGE IS MONEY IN THE BANK

(Please see my footnote at the end of this story).

I have been a spare time coin-op collector/dealer since the middle 1980's. I have concentrated on slot machines for the most part and like most folks, have grown to appreciate the less common varieties as my knowledge has expanded. I attended the Chicago shows and Arrington's Auctions in Las Vegas regularly in the 80's and have had plenty of help from other collector/dealers around the country.

I bought my first Jennings golf ball vender in the late 1980's. I have golfed since I was about 10, so as a slot machine collector and golfer, it seemed like one I had to own. At that time, they were running between \$2000 - \$3000, and they were somewhat easier to find than today (even without EBAY!). Well, after a few years, I found another machine that I had to have even more than the golf ball machine and I traded it away, but that's another story...

The years go by...It is now early September 2003. I'm doing a Saturday night "time waster", checking out e-bay slot machine listings. As you e-bay slot-watchers know, most Saturday nights are like watching paint dry. Usually very boring, but every now and then there's a good item with a bargain "buy it now" price. If you are lucky enough to be watching at the right time, and lucky enough for the item to be fairly represented, then you get a "fantastic find". That's what happened to me that night.

There it was, a Mills golf ball vendor! Listed with a starting price around \$5000 and a "buy it now" of \$7500. There were a couple of photos, but you couldn't see if the mechanism was correct. I e-mailed the seller to see if he could supply better pictures. I was sure someone would hit it if I waited much longer. The machine was within driving distance, so that helped with the decision. I decided if I went to pick it up and it wasn't correct, I could probably back out of the deal. About 20 minutes after I first saw the listing I hit the "buy it now".

After making the decision to buy it I traded e-mails and phone conversations with the seller. We agreed that I would drive to his place the following weekend with a cashier's check to cover the transaction and pick up the machine. He forwarded me better photos that gave me the confidence that the machine was correct.

The next weekend I drove about 4 hours, paid for and picked up my machine. When I got home I unloaded it and gave it a good cleaning. The escalator had a couple of quarters lodged, and the glass was broken as if someone tried to pry them out. The reels were set on jackpot. This had to be due to someone cleaning out the golf balls when they put the machine in storage. The machine was still set for battery operation. The old dry cells were rotting away. I bought a couple 6volt batteries, hooked them up and the pay-out worked properly the first time. The machine needed a good cleaning, but all in all it's in great shape and was well cared for (at least well stored).

OK, here's the real start of the story. The real "fantastic find". Oh sure, mine was good enough for me and good enough for most of us. But the real one is the one you dream about. When I was loading the machine up I asked the seller to tell me about the machine. He seemed a little sheepish. He told me he had decided he wasn't going to share his story, but after he met me and after I asked he changed his mind. He

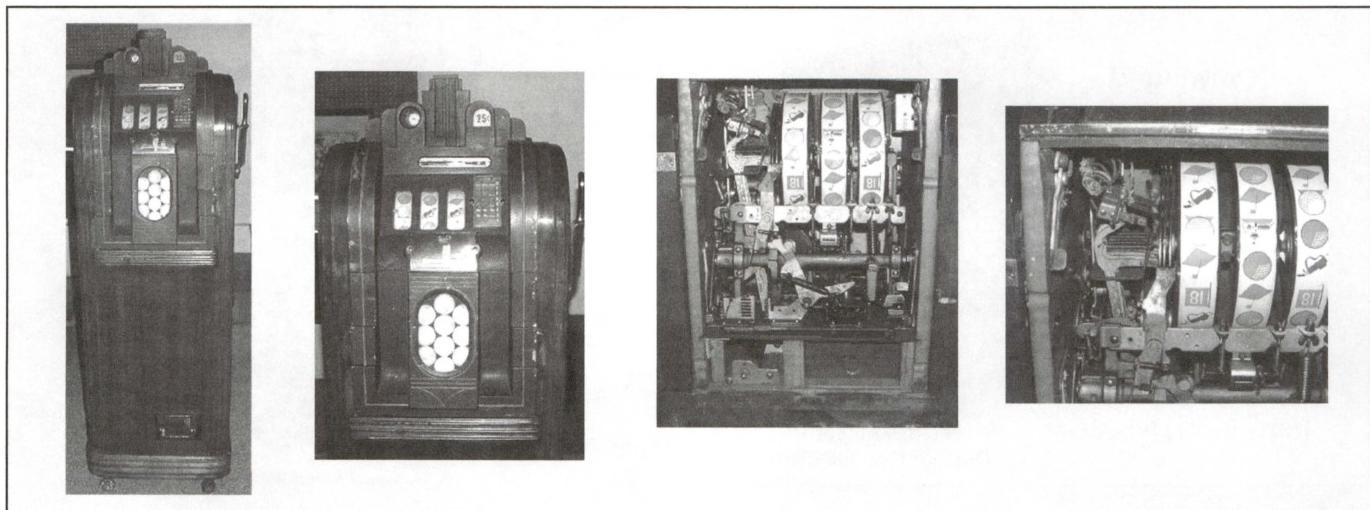
made me promise not to tell it immediately, but to let some time pass before I share it. I told him about COCA's fantastic find column and said I would write it up in a year and he asked me to send him a copy.

The story starts on a Saturday in early September 2003. This guy and his girlfriend were visiting garage sales looking for a coffee table. After most of the day, they decided to stop at one last sale. While they did the once over, the guy noticed a slot machine half covered in the corner of the garage and not part of the sale. The guy had no prior knowledge of slot machines. He asked the garage sale hostess whether she'd sell the machine. He thought it would look pretty cool in his office at home. The lady asked how much he'd give for it. She was cleaning the garage and could use the space. The guy pulled out a single crisp \$5 bill and stretched it between the thumb and forefinger of both hands said "how about five bucks"? She thought for a minute and said if he could lift it, he could have it for the \$5. Needless to say he handed her the money.

The lady told him what she knew about the machine. It came out of a country club in Kansas City area. (Yes, I knew which one, and I'll pass that on with the machine if I ever part with it). At some point her father ended up with the machine when the club got rid of it. She remembered it being at her house and playing it since she was a little girl back in the 60's.

As soon as the guy got home he started some internet research on the machine. I know you all appreciate the avenues opened up by the internet. From a zero knowledge base this guy got to about 75% of the knowledge level of the average collector in the matter of a couple of hours. He had determined that he had something pretty special. I don't think he could really appreciate how special – I'm guessing less than 5% of the surviving machines are consoles and of the surviving consoles around 1% would be golf ball machines, so to stumble onto something that unusual and uncommon and to pick it up for \$5 is like winning the lottery or like lightning striking twice. You can argue the percentages all you want – it doesn't change my point. Anyway, this guy got home in mid afternoon and after a couple of hours of research had it listed on e-bay the same day – the day I bought it. He turned \$5 into \$7500 in just a few hours – I'd like to hear somebody top that one! Sure, it turned out well for me too. But who wouldn't trade places with a guy that finds something like that, something that wasn't for sale, for a price that can't be beat. I would be surprised if this "Fantastic Find" doesn't go down in history as the lowest price ever paid for a Mills golf ball vendor.

Footnote: That was a great TALE OF THE HUNT, but listen to this...Another Mills Golf Ball Vendor was found in Northern Florida in January of this year. It was sold at a Friday night auction in North Carolina. It brought considerably more than the "Buy It Now" price for Tim's golf ball vendor. The photos in this article are of the North Carolina Mills Golf Ball Vender. Remember to PRAY FOR MORE STUFF



Gerald Shearer's Story of Building a Slot Machine

I am or was a Knitting Machine Master Mechanic. Before I enlisted in the US Infantry, where as Sergeant in the mechanical part of Ordinance, I was asked to build a slot machine for the Officers' Club. This was in the New Bebries, just before our 27th Division went in for the invasion of Okinawa.

I built a machine very similar to the one in the pictures. It worked with nickels, but the winnings had to be paid by hand.

When we went to Okinawa, I took the machine with me as far as the beach. I left it there when we advanced inland. I never saw it again. This was about 1945.

I got a job after the war building knitting machines. Later I started my own business and then retired in 1996. I built the machine once again, but this time I installed a mechanical payout and a jackpot. The pictures will serve to describe the machine in more detail.

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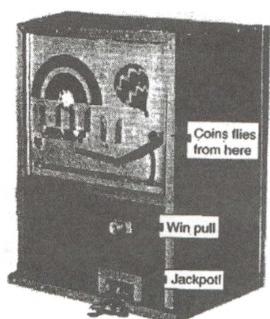
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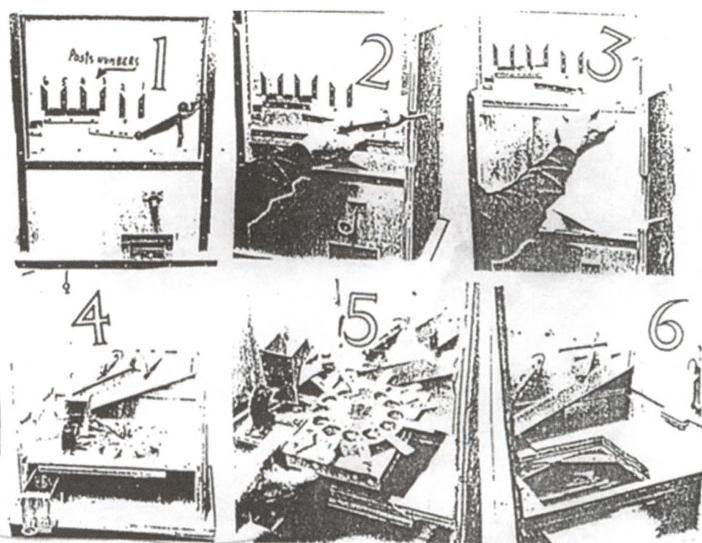
Description of the series of photos below:

Note in the front panel you see six pointed posts. Counting from right to left (coins trajectory is from right to left) the section between post 4 and 5 is the winning section. Between 1 and 2 and 2 and 3 the coins are returned. All others you lose.

The throw-bar is spring-loaded and actuated from the right side. By pulling it down and releasing it, coins will fly in proportion to the distance the throw-bar was held down. Winning can be adjusted two ways: by closing the distance between the winning section (post #4 and #5). Also by tightening the spring support via the adjustment nut located on top and behind the coin receiver slot. Notice that in the winning sections (post #4 and #5) the posts are pointed the opposite way to favor the house.

The payout wheel (dispenser) located inside holds 11 payouts. You can fill it with 11 different amounts. Each section holds up to 15 coins. If you want one to hold more, a one inch diameter tube can be attached to one section.

It is a lot of fun to build this home entertainment machine, especially the payout mechanism. It was constructed so that each section can easily be taken out for inspection or adjustments.



ACMCA Annual Coin-Op Show

by Alex Warschaw

On October 23rd and 24th the ACMCA (Antique coin Machine collector's Association) held its annual Coin-Op show in Arcadia, California. Fortunately my schedule was clear and with no conflicts I decided to set up at the show. I brought lots of counter top games and miscellaneous items to the show. Ray and Billie Dier did a great job of coordinating the shows set up and gate and should be commended for their efforts. They made the dealers feel welcome and always available to handle problems. Although the show was not that big it did fill up two nice size rooms. The gate was pretty good considering the size of the show and those that did come were buyers. I did very well and met a lot of new California buyers that do not routinely attend the Chicagoland Show. I think most of the dealers were pleasantly surprised with the show and did well overall. Ira Warren brought some great machines and displays. There seemed to be something for everyone. Jack Brink brought lots of parts and was a big hit with the dealers and restorers of arcade and slot machines. I would suggest if you are planning a trip to California why not time it to coincide with the next ACMCA event. For more information on joining or attending the next show please contact Ray or Billie Dier (562) 430-4394 or e-mail them at Diermanor@charter.net. Please check out the pictures and see what you missed.



CHEWING GUM AND THE MACHINES THAT SOLD IT!

Cover Story by *Roger Smith, Randy Razzoog, Dave Cook, Ken Rubin and Alex Warschaw*

For many decades in the last century, vending and chewing gum were virtually synonymous - put a penny in a vending machine and you were buying gum. Want to buy gum? You would likely get it from a vendor, more often than not, found sitting on a merchant's counter. Long before soft drinks and bottled water, the bulk of vending sales was chewing gum. There were even some brands of chewing gum that appear to only have been sold through vendors. For many collectors of coin-operated machines, this connection has opened the door to an interest in chewing gum itself and it is also why many coin-op collectors were eagerly awaiting Bill Enes' book on chewing gum. (A book he was working on at the time of his death and soon to be published by David Cook.)

The first commercial chewing gum, Curtis and Son's spruce gum, made first in 1848, was sold from the countertops of pharmacies. For the next 40 years, spruce and paraffin gums were sold from counter-top display boxes for the simple reason that gum vending machines were virtually non-existent. While examples of vending, such as the honor box that sold tobacco for a penny, did exist, it wasn't until 1888, when vending machines selling Adams gum were introduced to the elevated railways of New York city that coin-operated vending really began to catch on. There were, of course, examples of vendors that sold everything from cigars to writing paper, but vending, as an industry, owes the bulk of its growth to the universal commodity of chewing gum.

In the case of the popular Adams vendors, we know from both history and the physical evidence that the vendor was secondary to the gum. Not only was the gum first made and widely distributed well before the vendors existed, but many examples of the counter-top sales boxes and displays are widely available. Many of the existent Adams gum vending machines carry prominent patent numbers that allow us to unravel more of the story. In the case of the Adams machines, the patent records show the inventor not to be Adams, who was an inventor himself, but rather John A. Williams of Brooklyn, New York. Now we all know that Thomas Adams, Sr. was from Brooklyn, so it might be logical that Williams might have been an Adams

employee, but the patent records indicate that the patents were assigned to "the Williams Automatic Machine company, of Moundsville, West Virginia." We don't know at this point if the association between these machines, which prominently carry the Adams name, was one of direct corporate interaction (subsidiary, contract, other?) or just a marriage of convenience - an opportunity to make money from a popular brand, just like contemporary ties to trendy brands, current movies, or celebrities.

Another example of chewing gums preceding the associated vendors are the popular chewing gums made by John Colgan. In Louisville, Kentucky, John Colgan, a pharmacist, had been selling a chewing gum made from balsam gum sweetened with sugar. Hearing of Thomas Adams' success with the chicle base, Colgan decided to market a tastier gum. In 1879, Colgan took a gamble and purchased 1,500 pounds of chicle (the smallest amount he could get) and set about blending it with the spicy aromatic sap of the Balsam Tolu tree, a flavoring base for many cough mixtures. "Colgan's Taffy-Tolu Chewing Gum - the Tolu-Flavored Chew" was an overnight success. Despite beautiful advertising designed to create brand loyalty, within a year there were more than ten other companies making Tolu-flavored gums. John Colgan sold his chewing gum from his pharmacy but also hit on another scheme that expanded his market dramatically - he enlisted an army of children who sold his gums from hand baskets carried on-board streetcars and trains. Like latter day paperboys, these diminutive hawkers sold the gum on consignment. When Colgan's gum was sold from vendors, they were vendors made by the National Vending Machine Company. Here again, it is apparent that the bulk of the sales were not by way of the machines.

There are many examples where the relationship gum and vending machines was the other way around - the vendors were the major, if not only, point of sales. One of the best-known examples of this is the popular line of Pulver vendors. While there are references to Pulver stick gum and extant examples of these packs survive, far and away the most commonly found examples of Pulver gums

are the tab gums vended by the various incarnations of the Pulver wall vendors. Evolving in form and function over many years, the persistence of the Pulver line is testimony to the success of the vendor and the gum. Each must have been successful in its own right or neither would have flourished to the extent that it did.

It is interesting that the founders of the Pulver company were also involved with the earlier DiGesto Gum Company (also of Rochester, New York.) The Digesto gum made by this company is known by advertising and wrapper examples, but very few (if not a single) example of the associated DiGesto vending machine is known. This would appear to be an example of a situation where the machine did not catch on, while the gum was sufficiently successful to have had enough sales that examples have survived.

Another common example of a symbiotic relationship between the vendor and the chewing gum was Zeno gum. While Zeno vendors must have been a significant outlet for the various Zeno chewing gums, it is also apparent that Zeno chewing gums were also widely available in counter-top displays for retail sales. Black Zeno strong boxes and blue and white Delft decorated tin boxes carrying the Zeno name are staples at flea markets and antique shops all over the country. Even in the case of the glass skeletal Mansfield vendor, little aluminum gum boxes are common and trade cards with the Mansfield name are occasionally found.

There are examples of where there were essentially no other outlets for the brand of chewing gum other than the associated vendor. These vary from the rare Tropico vendor to the more common Millard's, Velvet Mint and Chick-mint vendors. There is also an example of where the vendor came first and then the chewing gum, and it is one that even beginning collectors are familiar with - Ford Gum.

The story goes that, in 1913, Mr. Ford S. Mason, a Lockport, New York roofing salesman was looking for a way to pass the winter months when the roofing business came to a halt. Mr. Mason happened across a man in the then unusual business of operating vending machines for chewing gum. The idea was still somewhat novel and Mason sensed an opportunity for winter employment. With borrowed money, he leased 102 machines and put them in shops and stores in western New York State. Each succeeding winter, Ford Mason would

return to the vending business and, with more experience, he began to realize that penny gum vending could be made into a full-time business. The gum and vending industry of the time was somewhat shaky, with the vendors unreliable and the gum of poor quality. He knew if he could offer a reliable product then he could have a substantial portion of the market. Mason reportedly consulted his father, a Baptist minister, about his decision to enter the vending business full-time. In 1919, his father came up with a design and received a patent with Ford (figure 2). It is this design that has remained virtually unchanged over the past 85 years.

In 1923, after having passed machine serial #5000 the year before, the Ford Vending Machine Company was incorporated. Through the 1920's, the company produced and sold only vending machines of the familiar design. In the early 1930's, Mason realized that the poor quality of the then existent gum was a major hindrance to sales and represented yet another opportunity for his company. Working from the basement of the abandoned church in Lockport, Mason spent months perfecting the formula for improved flavor and texture. In 1934, the company changed its name to Ford Gum and Machine Company to reflect the new dimension of the business. Since that time, Ford gum has been exclusively sold through these vending machines.

Not every gum company ventured into the vending business or used vending machines made by others to sell their wares. Tin and paste-board counter-top displays abound for brands of chewing gum that vary from the relatively common brands of Fitch's, Kis-me and Yueta, to the uncommon On Time, French Clock, J.R. Watkins, Trauty, The Doctor, Jumbo, Florida, and Coney island chewing gums. Despite often-beautiful advertising or displays, no associated machines carrying these brands are currently known.

What about the role of vending machines as advertising vehicles to boost over-the-counter sales? Certainly the prominent use of the Adams name on their machines, the intricate visible workings of the Mansfield machine, the globed majesty of the Case or L.E. West vendor, or the unique look of the Teddy Bear or Niagara vendors attracted attention and promoted the brand. What is not known is how effective this approach was. In many cases, it would appear that this was secondary

based on the apparent level of sales either already occurring (Adams' and Colgan's) or the limited over-the-counter sales that seemed to have taken place (Pulver). It is also apparent that, in at least a few cases, these relationships may have been opportunistic. An example of this is the fact that the same rare dome machine that carries the L.E. West name is also found with the Buffalo and Somerville names attached to it.

One specific example of a vending machine (or trade stimulator, if you like) specifically designed to promote sales of gum was the Adams Five Star Ball and Package Gum machine, listed as a "Mystery Machine" (#29 in Bill Enes' Silent Salesmen Too, page 208.) This machine was a vendor with a gambling twist, making it a trade stimu-

lator by some reckoning. It vended ball gum, but the paper labels found on these unusual machines specifically state that they were there to promote Adams Five Star Ball and Package Gum. Apparently this ploy was not all that effective, since few of the machines and even less of the gum seems to have survived.

Whether you are interested in the intricacy of coin mechanisms and industrial art, the history of an industry that at its peak in the 1920's had over 120 different gum manufacturing companies, or just like good stories, the connection between chewing gum and the machines that vended them has something for everyone.

Roger Smith



Pulver's

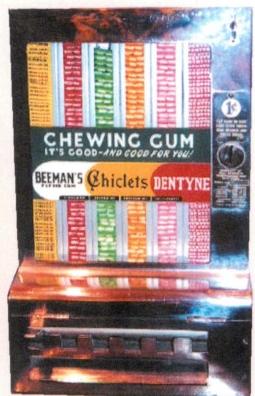
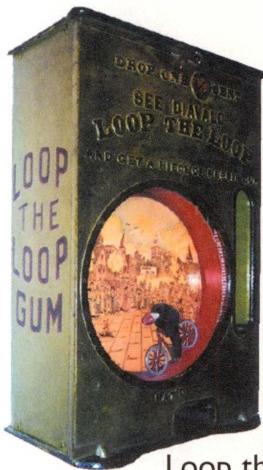


Zeno's



Colgan's

West's Cream Gum



Mills Automatic

Loop the Loop



L.E. West Pepsin



Adams 5 Star



Niagara's

Honor Box

AUCTION NEWS:

by Sal Mazzeo - Cincinnati, Ohio

I attended an auction put on by Forsythe Auctioneers on Sunday, November 7, 2004 in Cincinnati, Ohio. The auction was held at the Starlite Ballroom, very close to the Ohio River. It was primarily an antique mechanical music machine auction, but there were 14 mechanical slot machines there for sale also. It was advertised locally and also on Ebay, so there were numerous bidders, in person, on the phone, and on-line. Most were nickel slots, except for a 25 cent Bursting Cherry. Except for the castings/cabinet on the Mills War Eagle, all were original antique slots, both in restored and unrestored condition. It had been a long time since so many antique mechanical slot machines had been for sale in a Cincinnati auction! Therefore, I had to find the time to attend the auction, and it was enjoyable to see so many antique slots for sale at one time.

Auction prices are listed below. One key point to note for these prices: you have to add 10% buyers premium to the amounts listed below, as well as local 7% sales tax unless you had an exemption certificate. This makes the prices below not quite as much of a bargain as they might first appear!



256. Jennings Club Console
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Sold for \$2400.



257. Mills Bursting Cherry
Brown Front, Slot Machine
Sold for \$1100.



258. Mills Bursting Cherry
Brown Front, Slot Machine
Sold for \$1300.



259. Mills High Top
Slot Machine
Sold for \$1100.



260. Jennings Duchess
Slot Machine
Sold for \$850.



261. Mills High Top
Slot Machine
Sold for \$900.



273. Mills High Top
Slot Machine
Sold for \$1050.



274. Mills Bursting Cherry
Slot Machine
Sold for \$1300.



275. Pace All Star Comet
Slot Machine
Sold for \$1000.



276. Mills War Eagle
Slot Machine
Sold for \$1100.
Reproduction Machine

WANTED \$ WANTED

**BUY-SELL
TRADE**

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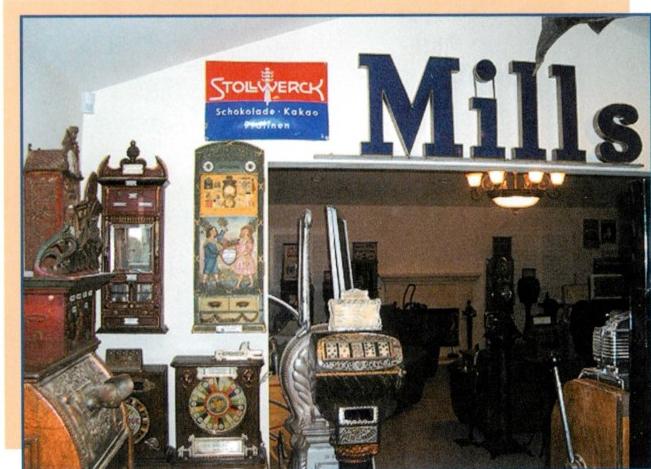
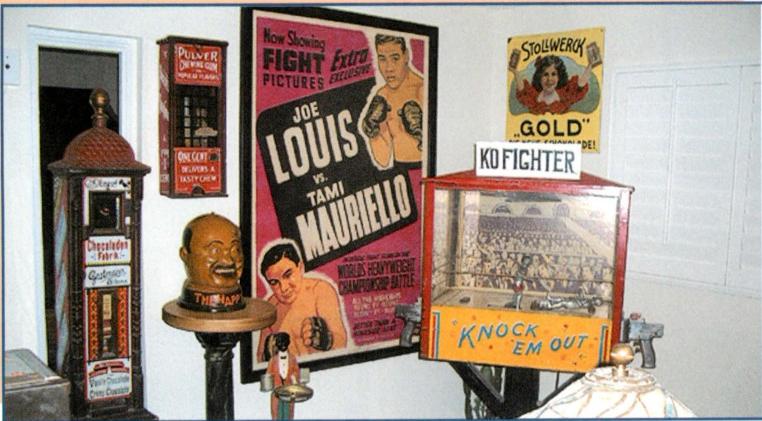
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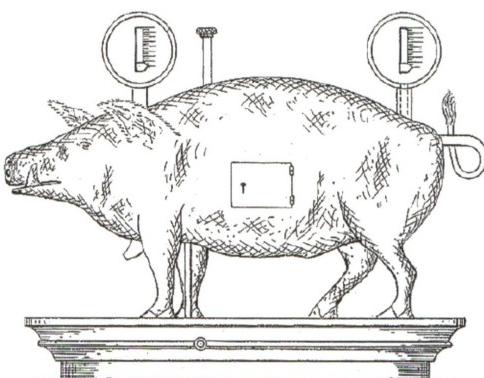


Cognac Venders and
Other Oddities

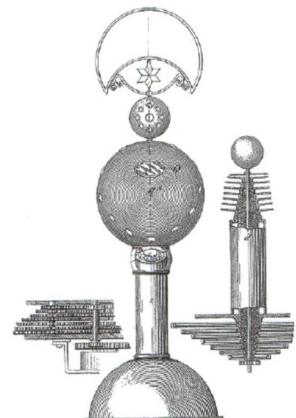
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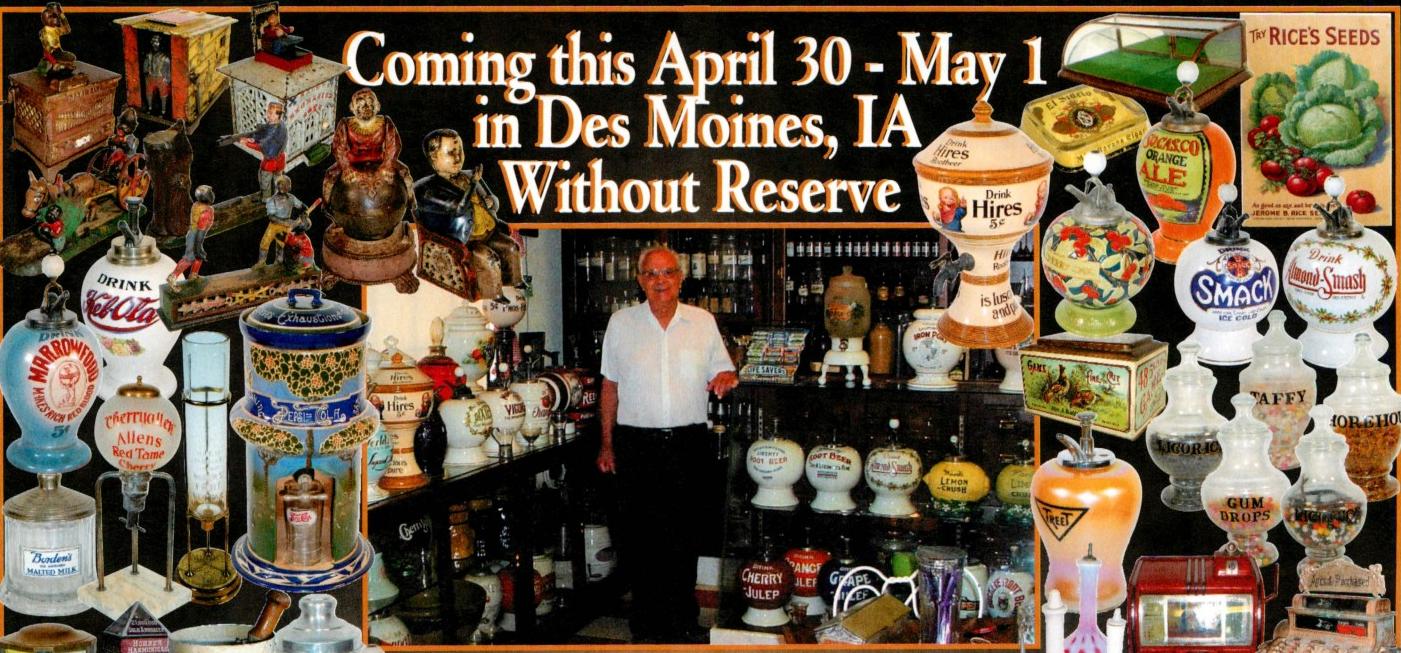
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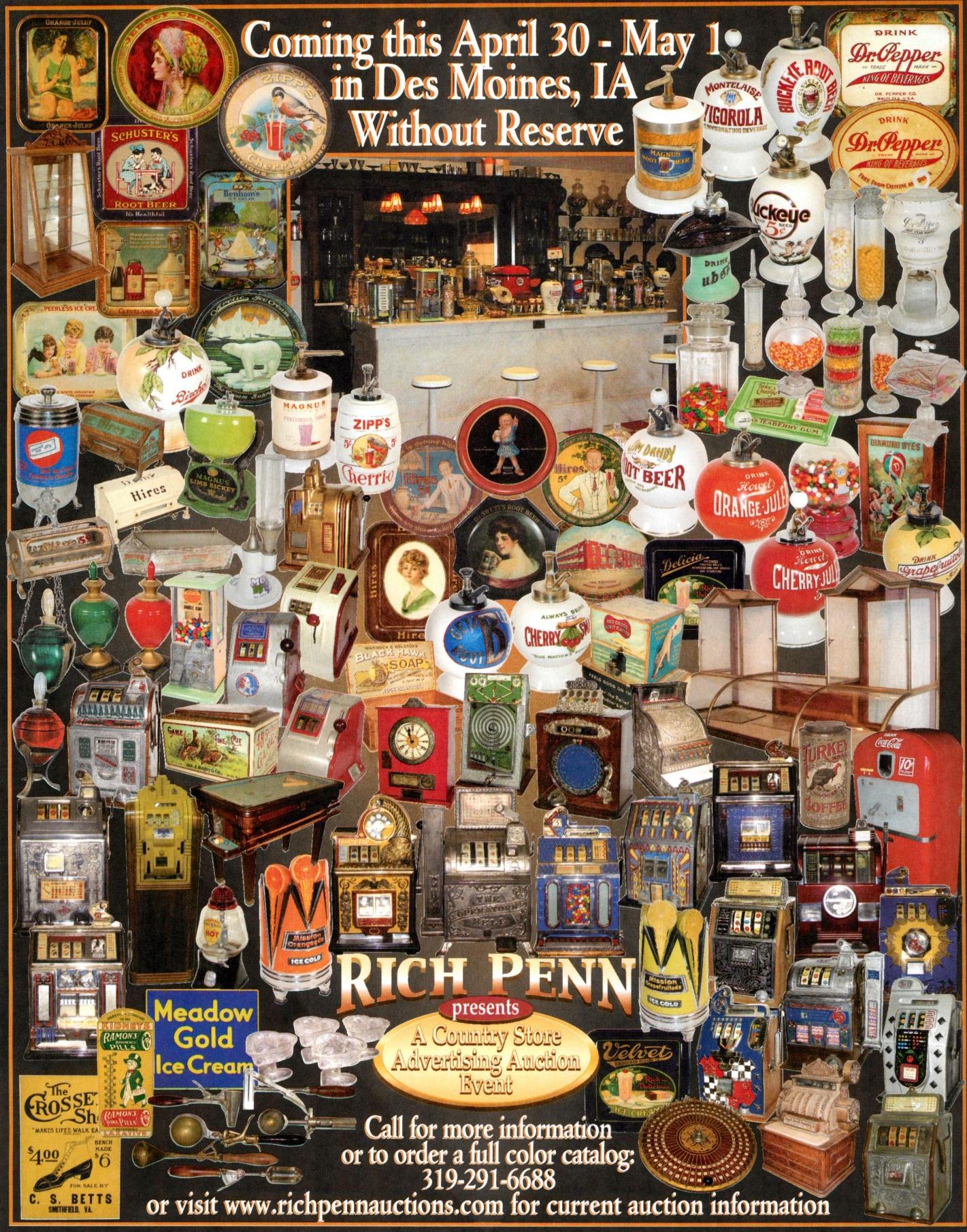


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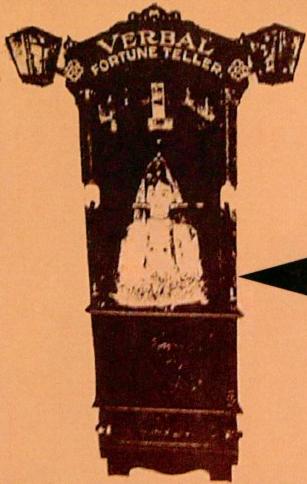
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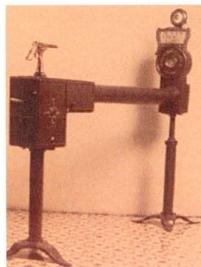
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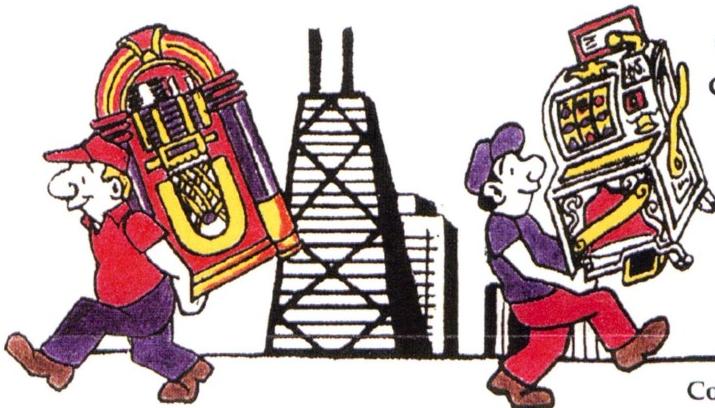
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HERSHEY GAME ROOM EXPO

by Jimmy Rosen

On December 3 thru 5, 2004, the east coast welcomed back the first gameroom show in many years. Organized by Jimmy Rosen, owner of the Old Sled Works in Duncannon, PA, the **Hershey GameRoom Expo** was held at the AACA Antique Auto Museum in Hershey, PA.

More than 70 booths of coin-operated and gameroom items filled this sold-out facility. Over 2500 people visited getting a chance to see the show and the museum. Several COCA members were in attendance, both as exhibitors and customers. There was active buying all 3 days with many exhibitors claiming sales were above expectations. (One vendor actually sold everything out of his double booth by Saturday afternoon!)

Due to the success of the premier show, Rosen anticipates making it an annual event. For further information, readers are invited to visit www.sledworks.com.



The Delong's (Johnsonburg, PA) and Bill Fannasy (Harrisburg, PA) are seen among Dick's famous carvings in the background.



Many jukes and slots in Bill Fannasy's booth including a rare Watling Owl.



Jeff Moorhead (Mocanaqua, PA) had a diverse selection of vintage arcade machines, jukes and kiddie rides.

Back in Time Warehouse (Charles Town, WV) had a beautiful selection of restored soda and vending machines along with diner furnishings and accessories.



Thanks to Fred and Larry Debaugh for having a great selection of slots. (Ask Larry about the Caille Ben Hur he bought at the show from some guy who just showed up with it in the back of his car. Great find!)



A SHOCKING Expose in Coin-Op!

by John Peterson

Amazing, isn't it, how powerful the word "shocking" is in the English language? Whenever I see the word, I immediately tune in, eagerly awaiting some new titillation, like pictures of Howard Stern, NUDE! Well, not really. Those pictures are already out and "totally disgusting" is a more appropriate description. Still, we all like a little shock in our lives now and then so, in the spirit of community service, today's article is about a shocking curiosity.

Photo "A" is a game I recently picked up off Ebay. The name, "Electra Amuser" gives a hint as to the function. It's a shocker, to be sure, but it's much more than that. Let's peel back the layers and see what this baby has to offer. Have a seat but for heaven's sake, don't touch anything!

"Electra Amuser" is actually a French Allwin, or more specifically, a French Allwin reserve. As with all gambling products, the designer's goal is to create a machine that looks simple to operate and easy to conquer on your way to fame and fortune. Allwins certainly were simple to operate. After dropping in your coin, the machine delivered one ball for you to shoot around the track. If you were fortunate enough to drop into a "win" hole, you were rewarded with whatever the machine dispensed, usually one penny. As time went by, more sophisticated Allwins appeared in an effort to distinguish themselves from those earlier games and capture anew the punter's coins. One of these new features offered was the "reserve." With an Allwin reserve, you start with the traditional one penny-one ball format. The excitement kicks in when you win. With the turn of the winning knob, you get a penny, your original ball plus three new (reserve) balls from the reserve "stack" that drop down to sit atop the hammer case, ready for duty. Photo "B" is



Photo "A"

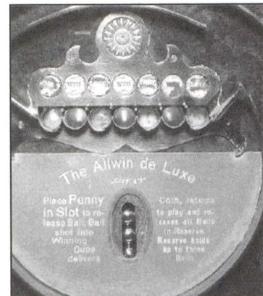


Photo "B"

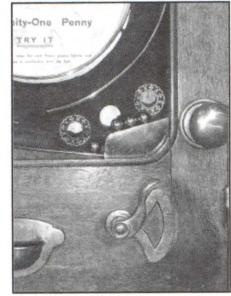


Photo "C"

a shot of the three balls in the reserve stack prior to release. (Photo "B" is actually a picture of a different machine, a German Allwin reserve shown for illustration. You cannot see the balls in the reserve stack on "Electra Amuser" because of the design of the instruction card.) Photo "C" shows the reserve balls sitting atop the hammer case, ready to join the action. When the reserve balls are active, a reserve ball is released into play from the top of the hammer case each time you "lose" until all balls are lost. After all balls are lost, it's back to the one ball per coin schedule. Anytime you win, you start afresh with the penny reward and all balls available. Bottom line, with the Allwin reserve, you have the potential of four balls to shoot instead of just the single ball with the traditional Allwin. What's not to love about that? Pack your bags, Honey! I'm playing an Allwin reserve and after I've cleaned this baby out, we're going to the Bahamas!

It is a testament to the skillful design of the game that operators could still make money with an allwin reserve. Even after giving the player four chances, you're still taking his coins in the long run. You're just allowing him to play longer while affording him the illusion of easy money. In the end, he still goes home with empty pockets! Not all that many Allwin reserves were produced and they are a decided minority. One reason may be because they are more complex machines and therefore more expensive to manufacture. I think the real reason is the public was satisfied playing

one ball at a time and as you know, you never give the sucker an even break!

“Electra Amuser” started life as a French Allwin reserve. I think it is French due in part to the fairly elaborate flower spandrels on the playfield. French games usually have these very attractive designs adorning their machines. The beauty of some of their playfields makes many French games true works of art. Some American slot machines can rival the French when it comes to appealing design although in a different style. Our earliest cast iron pieces by Mills are nothing short of magnificent! In my opinion, both the British and Germans tended to go with more utilitarian case-work and playfield design. Overall, it’s hard to beat a French machine for visual appeal. So, if this is French, why is it hanging out with the Brits in England and what’s with that spare set of knobs on the front?

The British have always been hyper-sensitive to games of chance. If it even smelled like a gambling machine, the authorities were quick to confiscate and prosecute. The resulting tension between the authorities and the operators led to some clever sleights of game. Allwins were developed in response to the legal restrictions against games of chance. Can you see the following exchange? “Honest, Officer; this is not a game of chance; it is strictly a game of skill. The penny that you can win? Why, that’s merely a token of our appreciation for your.....presence. Yes! Your kind presence at our humble establishment!” Depending upon the mood of the Bobby, that explanation may not have had the desired effect. A second layer of subterfuge might have been desirable. Enter electricity.

God Bless Ben Franklin. Were it not for electricity, barbecue would take on a whole new meaning! In the very early days of electricity, people were desirous of the sophistication that the new “electric” brought to their lives. Thomas Edison and his distribution system of electricity for home use revolutionized society in ways equal to what Henry Ford did to transportation. Electricity was fashionable, it was healthful, it was LIFE!

Together with this fascination came a willingness to believe anything and everything about the beneficial properties of electricity, regardless how silly they may seem today. The public rushed to the latest claim about the healthful properties of getting shocked. Electric shock could cure just about anything, from insomnia to ulcers to cancer. You name it and electricity was the answer! A whole field of quack medicine sprang up, capitalizing on nature’s own healing powers contained between the positive and negative terminals. Science eventually debunked these charlatans and electricity lost some of its luster, but not before the amusement folks got in on the action. The most obvious examples were the traditional shocking machines. For a small price, you could grab hold of the knobs and twist your way to serious pain!

These shocking properties had another benefit: diversion. By adding a shocking feature to a game, you could argue that the purpose was HEALTH! rather than GAMBLING! Now when the local constabulary came calling to inquire into the legality of the latest wall machine, the operator could swear that the patrons were engaged in health enhancement. The coin payout remained the conundrum in the equation and the electric ruse did not convince the authorities for very long. As a result, the service life of these combination all-win/shockers was rather short and they are fairly rare today.

“Electra Amuser” is one of these rarer games. Both France and Germany made many games specifically for England. “Electra Amuser” is set up for the large British penny and I can find no evidence of alteration to the coin related parts of the case so I’m guessing that it was originally produced in France for the English market. (One of my future articles will showcase foreign games made specifically for the English market.) After import, some smart operator incorporated a battery powered shocking feature to create the game you see, “Electra Amuser.” He also added the two brass knobs on the front that are necessary for administering the jolt.

When you attempt to incorporate a shocking

feature to a game of skill, certain problems must be overcome. For one, you must design it so that the battery is powered only during a portion of the play and does not remain energized either before the coin is inserted or after the play is complete. To do otherwise would drain the battery in short order. Secondly, you have to have a design that allows the players to bypass the shock feature completely if they so choose. An electrical shock may be entertaining to your casual patrons but it's a liability to your regular customers. Examining "Electra Amuser" provides some answers.

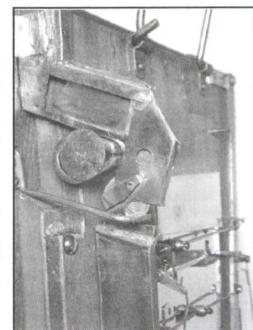
Do you find your games in first class condition? Am I the only one who unearths games in need of serious attention? If I am, then it is a gift for almost all the games I find and purchase are in non-working status. "Electra Amuser" was no exception. Anytime you have a mechanism that has suffered after-market modification, it's best to expect some surprises. The first thing I found was that the shocking mechanism interfered with the coin payout. Whoever installed the shocker placed it in such a position that the proper coin would not drop down the slide into the payout cup. In fact, the proper size coin could not even fit through the hole in the door that leads to the payout cup due to the positioning of the shocker. A smaller sized coin would fit but would not work the mechanism properly. The correct coin was the larger 1D penny. How to correct these two problems and make "Electra" amusing again? The first solution was to toss the existing coin slide and find one that correctly carried the 1D penny from the coin tube to the payout cup. The second required repositioning the shocking mechanism.

The third and most challenging problem centered on the shocker itself and how it would be wired. Besides providing an electrical shock, the solution would have to perform as described above. To make matters worse, the existent wiring was incomplete and unconnected which made it very interesting for a person of such limited talent: me. When faced with these apparently insolvable problems, I call on friends or family and make it their problem. I know, it's a weasel's refuge but it

works every time!

Help this time came in the form of Scott, my 18 year-old son. To do Scott justice would require several chapters which I'm not going to do. Suffice to say that he is the family's self-taught genius. We had an inkling when, in the 5th grade, he made a "Star Trek" transporter entrance to his bedroom, completely self-wired with strobe lights, black light, smoke, siren, escape tunnel, touch pad LED's and thumbprint identification. It was housed in a seven foot tall wood frame structure with plywood and cardboard, about the size of a small ice fishing house (we're in Minnesota, remember) and it took a good 5 minutes to follow the protocol just to get into his room. Far as I know, Dearly Beloved was the only one who was ever actually "transported" when she inadvertently backed into one of the live wire bundles with the monster plugged in. It is a blessing that the boy did not burn down our house. After describing my problem, Scott solved it rather quickly. Here is what he explained.

When the coin is deposited, it drops down the coin slide until it reaches a copper toggle bar. Photo "D" is a picture of a coin resting on the toggle bar. This bar is the heart of the circuit and acts as a switch to turn the power on and off. When the coin rests on the bar, the circuit is completed and the two brass knobs on the front of the case are "hot." The toggle bar protrudes through the front of the case and is controlled by the player. After the player has been electrically refreshed, he pushes the toggle to the left allowing the coin to continue down the coin slide, breaking the circuit and de-powering the battery. From this point forward, the game functions as a normal Allwin reserve machine. The battery will only come on line again with the introduction of another coin. And what about the potential for deliberate battery drain? Would it be possible to insert a penny and leave it resting on the toggle bar, drain-



ing the battery while waiting to ambush the next innocent person who happened to touch the two knobs? Most certainly! The only protection against this is greed: do you really want to give up your penny and the potential of future winnings for the joy of present mischief? Most people would say "no." However, enough would say "yes" to make this game economically unsatisfactory over the long run. Just like the faulty design of "Rainbow Roulette," another battery powered game destined to fail, (see "This Corndog Won't Hunt," COCA Times Volume 2, Issue 2,

July 2002) "Electra Amuser" should have more properly been called "Electra Abuser." The victims were the players and operators alike.

CONCLUSION

So ends the tale of "Electra Amuser." I hope you were at least amused, if not electrified! Next time, I will introduce you to another variation of wall game and some very scary clowns who live there. Until then, stay tuned and please, don't touch those knobs!

Want to talk British games and add a little excitement to your life? Write me at jp4@charter.net or call (952) 891-2312.

INSIDER TIP

There is a new website in Britain, devoted to British coin-operated machines. It has a wealth of information and is growing rapidly in content and interactivity. If you have any interest in these great games, take a look at www.pennymachines.co.uk. I promise, you won't be disappointed!

C.O.C.A. WEB SITE

Just a reminder to all.....that C.O.C.A. has its own web-site. It is maintained by member Al Fox and has news regarding shows, auction results, and classified ads, as well as a question and answer section.

the address is:

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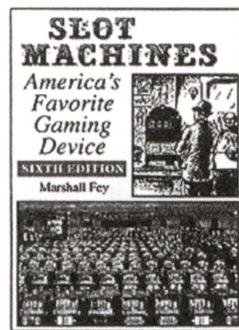
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5. What other activities would you like to see at the convention?
6. Make sure you leave your name and phone number so we can contact you.
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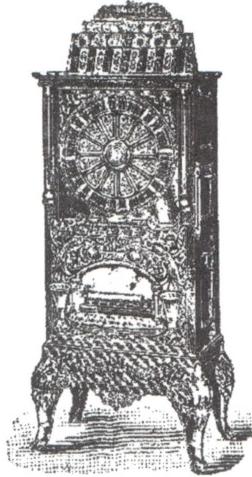
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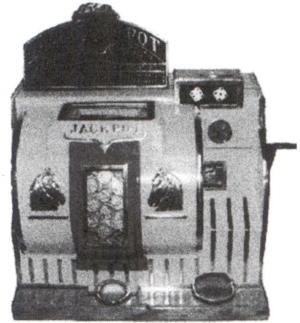


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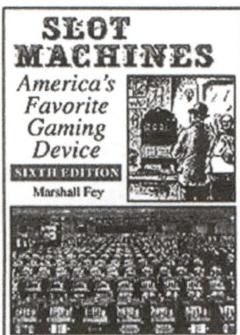
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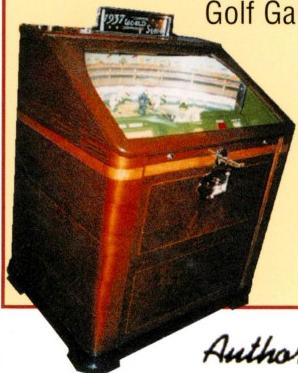
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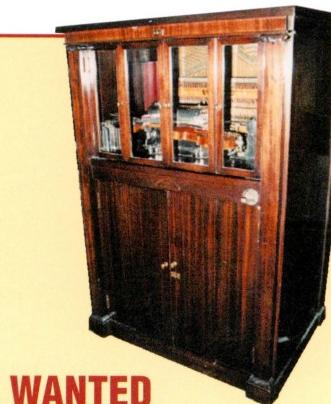
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